16.

WHERE IXDIFFEKEXCE is NECESSARY.—Nothing would be more perverse than to wait for the truths that science will finally establish concerning the first and last things, and until then to think (and especially to believe) in the traditional way, as one is so often advised to do. The impulse that bids us seek nothing but *certainties* in this domain is a religious offshoot, nothing better—a hidden and only apparently sceptical variety of the "metaphysical need," the underlying idea being that for a long time no view of these ultimate certainties will be obtainable, and that until then the " believer " has the right not to trouble himself about the whole subject We have no need of these certainties about the farthermost horizons in order to live a full and efficient human life, any more than the ant needs them in order to be a good ant. Rather must we ascertain the origin of that troublesome significance that we have attached to these things for so long. For this we require the history of ethical and religious sentiments, since it is only under the influence of such sentiments that these most acute problems of knowledge have become so weighty and terrifying. Into the outermost regions to which the mental eye can penetrate (without ever penetrating *into* them), we have smuggled such concepts as guilt and punishment (everlasting punishment, too !). The darker those regions, the more careless we have been. For ages men have let their imaginations run riot where they